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The MINISTER'S QUARTERLY

Continuing The Seminar Quarterly

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Gaius Glenn Atkins, D.D., L.H.D.
Editor

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Some Fruits of an Enforced Leisure

FOR the first time, in he does not know how long, the Editor has won a new sympathy for Job by aving troubles of his own. The details o not matter, but he has found out the iscomfort of being quite persistently un-mfortable. Whether he has borne it ith the traditional patience of Job must - left to his intimate associates, and ey are not likely to tell. The first neigh-rly first-aid to the injured came from iends over on the next hill, in an arm-ad of mystery stories, intriguing in title d ingeniously impossible in content. hey depend, on the whole, upon some us ex machina for the solution of their rious problems. The astute magician no finds the answers usually and finally ts all his suspects together, lectures em at analytical length and, in conclu-on says to the most unsuspected of them l, "Thou art the man, or the woman." Whereupon the culprit obligingly com-its suicide and everybody else goes to nch. This confirmed reader of such en-aging literature does not remember a se in which the question of guilt or nocence went to a jury. A thoughtful itic of the current vogue for mystery ories holds that their popularity is partly ue to the fact that they are a literature action, while most contemporaneous ction is so excessively psychological that othing ever happens except tiresome ates of mind. At any rate one changes mensions, climates and what else have ou when he finishes *The Murder of oger Ackroyd,* and begins the recently blished life of *Daniel Evans, Teacher, reacher and Theologian.*

This book is a labor of love. Raymond lkins edited its wealth of material with s fine sense of values and proportions. he material itself has been gathered om many sources and assembled by a mmittee from the Faculty of Andover-ewton Theological School. The basis the book is Doctor Evans' autobiog-phy, parts of which were published me years ago in the *Congregationalist* fore it became *Advance*—or afterwards. he autobiography is one hundred and enty-four pages of pure delight. It ould be difficult to parallel Dr. Evans' life for variety and wealth of experience. When they gave him a testimonial dinner at the end of his term at Andover-Newton, Frederick Page spoke for the trustees. "Daniel Evans," he said, "deserves a coat-of-arms," and he suggested its proper legends and symbols to the College of Heralds. "For an Evans coat-of-arms, here is a suggestion; a broad shield, half white and half gold in token of the purity and preciousness of truth; a cross in the center; in the upper left hand corner a student lamp and in the upper right a miner's lamp: in one lower corner a writer's pen and in the other a miner's pick. For the motto, The End CROWNS THE WORK."

Daniel Evans found an open road, through many turns, from Scranton coal-breakers to academic halls and honors (just as George A. Gordon found a road from the turnip fields of Scotland to a pulpit throne). How Evans did it and what he did in doing it and whom he met and what he won are all parts of the record. Romance is too colorless a word for his career and one may reconstruct the movements of theology during Evans' lifetime and much significant history from his autobiography. For those of us who belong, with some inconsequential dated differences, to Daniel Evans' generation and to the academic and denominational cross section of American life to which he belonged, the great company of the very elect who were his comrades possesses a deeply moving interest. They too were our friends. Their names are on our honor rolls and they constitute our Communion of the Saints. Much of what he tells belongs now to a vanished world. Its peace and hope seem like a dream.

Daniel Evans' life, the mediatorial quality of his teaching and the balanced clarity of the sermons and addresses herein included, have an incomparable documentary value. They may be offered as exhibit "A" in refutation of those who now discredit the whole liberal contribution to our religious and theological inheritances. It does seem sometimes that those who thus discredit the service of the free and the inquiring mind to Chris-

tian faith, have never really read the literature in which that free and inquiring mind expresses itself. There is a great gulf fixed between the mind, of which Reinhold Niebuhr is perhaps the most distinguished example, and the mind of which Daniel Evans was an equally distinguished representative. Perhaps the historian of the future will tell us how the gulf came to be. We are too near it yet to know. Those who have thus preserved the memory of Professor Evans, and he was so much more than Professor, have put us all in their debt. Of Evans himself one may finally say: It needed an enormous native force to take his feet out of the dusty stream of a coal-breaker and set them on the high road which lead to the pulpit, the University and the Theologian's chair. It might have happened in Scotland. It did happen in America.

* * *

There are books enough on preaching to fill alcoves in any library, and there is always another. It is a curious affair. Fundamentally the art of preaching is unexpectedly simple. A plain-spoken English friend once said that teaching homiletics was a fool-proof vocation, and the only text book really needed was Ruskin's "Seven Lamps of Architecture." In the main the editor, being then a Professor of Homiletics himself, was inclined to agree with him. Nevertheless most preachers have a consuming curiosity about how other preachers do it, and the vast and various range of the preacher's message through always changing conditions offers an inexhaustible subject matter.

Therefore, Halford Luccock's "In the Minister's Workshop" is a brilliant contribution to any preacher's library. A wise friend once said of another man's mind "that it had hooks on it," by which he meant that everything was grist which came to its mill. The psychologist would say, perhaps, that such minds are brilliantly original in their suggestion lines, and find doors opening upon rich corridors of thought, where most of us find only blank walls. Well, Luccock's mind is like that. His studies of preaching values in the text of the Old and the New Testament have supplied us all with new and stimulating texts. He adds to an almost electric insight and enviable originality, a complete at-homeness in literature upon which he constantly draws for felicitous illustrations. The titles of his seventeen chapters give new allure to old truths; "An Art is a Band of Music" "In the Beginning was the Idea"; "Words are the Soul's Ambassadors." Luccock's style is as flexible as a silver web. His comments, criticisms and epigrams flash as one turns his pages. Reading him is like taking hold of the poles of a battery. He makes one's mind tingle. There are few books on preaching, which a preacher may take into his own workshop, with so stimulating a sense of living with a master craftsman.

* * *

Religion in all its aspects was strangely simple to begin with. It was, a wise historian of religion once said, a man's effort to be in right relationship with a power not himself, in whose keeping were the issues of his life. This was and is a blanket definition, deficient through its generality, but it precises something which so many current definitions of religion leave out: that there is a personal relationship between the worshipper and what he worships. When the sense of personal relationship grows dim or fades entirely out, religion has taken a mortal wound and no psychologies nor metaphysics can heal it. It may be a comfort to know that the universe is kind, but one does not pray very long or very earnestly to the cosmos. The only value of a kind universe, beside being more comfortable to live in, is its testimony to a personal kindness ordering and inter-penetrating the universe. It is true that pan-theism does pray more or less, but its prayers and worship are really sustained by an older and simpler faith.

The complexities of worship, with their theological overtones, are the creation of the priest who, making a life business of it, amplifies it sometimes endlessly. And there is always an almost irresistible tendency to make a drama of it. Most studies of prayer and worship have forgotten this basic simplicity. Books on prayer and worship are sadly over-written. It is a relief, therefore, to find a book on worship like Dr. Heimrath's "Genius of Public Worship" compact and clearly

ritten, and maintaining valiantly that, hatever the subject or values of wor-ip may be and they are beyond easy mputation—"in every service of worship od is to be found in the heart and on e altar," and that if worship is no more an "a complicated interaction of nerve nters" churches will be emptied over ght. Not perhaps over night of course, t in due time.

One tap root of Christian worship, eimrath holds, was the ancient Jewish nagogue, and he shared a modern syna-gue service to get the proper feeling. e other tap root was the ritual and ological development of the Pauline ception of the Last Supper. The final ult of the fusing of these two lines was, her unexpectedly, the Greek Orthodox d the Latin Catholic masses, both of ich are considered at length and sym-hetically. Dr. Heimrath than considers worship forms resulting, in the vari-s Protestant Communions, from the Ref-mation. This also is well done. Finally, rship creates for itself vast and various rms of expression, in architecture, in and in music—"the way of the artist God." The book deals with all this mpetently. And in conclusion stresses e sovereign services of worship to our rn needy time. Worship affords, the thor thinks, the true approach to the cial gospel and to a religious education. worship-centered church has a sustain-coherence nothing else can supply. ere is an excellent bibliography. Hard see how anything could be done better the same printed status.

* * *

For command of material, opulent in stance and detail, and the faculty to ave it into fabric richly shot with color, n Wyck Brooks is unmatched. He has, rs the "blurb" on the jacket of his latest ok, *The World of Washington Irving,* n every reward possible for an Ameri-n writer to receive; and deservedly. The lices of his three major books are un-ievable manifests of riches. There are proximately between five and six hun-d items in the Irving Index and all of m names of individuals. They are a ss section of the literary masters of human mind and they are all intro-ed in a sentence, a paragraph or a chapter with a sure touch. Brooks knows the literature he draws upon. One can always tell. A name may be used as a cliché, to make a show of erudition, but with shallow background. It is easily possible to call up Plato's shade or Dante's, either. It is not so easy to reveal, in a single sentence even, a lifelong companionship with the Dialogues or the Divine Comedy. For here something more than facile erudition is revealed. Here in Van Wyck Brooks is the full saturation of a remarkable mind through a laborious life time with the great literatures.

Brooks' pages are alive; his characters are entire and bound in with the filament of the vaster world of which they are a part. His major books are too massive, for all their brilliancy, to be read in continuous sittings. They are to be lived with and gone back to as a fascinating and very humbling resource. They help one to understand how very little he really knows. Job was less fortunate in resource literature than the editor. He had only his comforters, and they sometimes seemed miscalled. But between them they managed to create one of the masterpieces of literature; which is another difference between Job and the editor.

* * *

Perhaps an unusually early Lent may do something to shorten the winter which begins already to seem long, and which has certainly, through all our northern regions been tryingly severe. Lent comes again with unusual significance and challenges. In a world of death and sorrow, self-crucified on its cross for lust and power, the way and truth and life of Jesus Christ assert themselves with a new sovereignty. They are the real Lenten message.

With this issue THE SEMINAR QUARTERLY gets a new name, and enters its third period. To begin with it did no more than report the findings of selected groups on worship and preaching. For several years now it has been just what you have been getting and reading. It now becomes quite definitely a publication for ministers with the manifold aspects of the ministry for its spacious field. Those responsible for its publication will need time to develop their hopes and plans. Be patient with them—and lend them a hand.

The Use of Form in Worship

The Rev. Richard Ritter

Minister, Congregational Church, Southington, Conn.

THERE is, between man and God, a highway, with traffic in both directions. "An highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness" (Isa. 35:8). If that verse were being written today, perhaps the figure would be changed to an air-lane, or a telephone wire. But the meaning would be the same.

The messages coming from God to man are called "Revelation." Those from man to God are "Worship."

Revelation is the most beautiful and gracious of all the attitudes and actions of God toward man. That he wants us to know him at all is in itself quite overwhelming. The means that he has taken to reveal himself to us are great and varied. He has spoken through the still small voice in our own souls. He has spoken through the lives and characters of noble men, and particularly through the precious and priceless life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ his Son our Lord. He has spoken through the creative acts of the physical universe. The artistry of his nature is prodigal in its majesty, power and beauty. Before it we can but fall in wonder and adoration, "And ponder within ourselves no earthly thing; For the King of kings and Lord of lords cometh" even unto us.

Our response to the great grace and love which God has revealed to us in these many ways is Worship. Should we not, in our reply, give him (as he has given us) the very best we have? To be sure, God seeth the secrets of the heart. Sincerity rather than form is the deepest essential. Even though we used no form at all in our groping toward him, God could understand us. Our worship is certainly not dependent upon correct form. We all know that. But there are two things which it may be necessary to say about the use of form in worship. First, that form develops thought and feeling. We grow by expression. Without means of expressing the secrets of the heart, those secrets would always stay childish and elementary. A dog has feelings, eve thoughts; but because he can find n words to express them, they remain of very low order. Artistic form, therefor is of tremendous value to help us to gro in the nature and content of that whic is to be expressed.

Secondly, when we worship (or, fo that matter, seek to express ourselves any way) in *common* with other me form is an absolute necessity. Around ce tain words, or objects, or sounds, motions, or conventions, we unite ou thoughts. Without some uniting mediu the thoughts of two men could not, ex cept in the rarest cases, be homogeneou simultaneous, or mutually understandabl The rare exceptions are caused by my tical union of a kind which, though w admit and glory in its reality, is neve theless hardly comprehended by most o us even when it happens to ourselves. W cannot follow its laws or reproduce it will. Hence, if we wish to worship wit other people, we must generally use som kind of outward artistic form.

I

Form in common worship is therefo not to be feared or viewed askance. T say that it is not necessary in worsh is but a half truth. To say that it is n indigenous to Congregationalism is com pletely untrue. We Congregationalis have forms. We have architecture, musi words, literature, symbols, and many oth types of artistry. By comparison with ce tain other methods of worship the trad tional Congregational type is simple. I comparison with formlessness it is com plex. Therefore those who glory in hol ing to simplicity are holding only to comparative simplicity. This comparati simplicity varies from congregation congregation and from age to age. Th distinctive thing about Congregationalis is not its simplicity in worship, or i liberalism in theology, but rather its fre dom of government and usage. Free co gregations adopt varying modes of com

n worship. But, due to our fellowship association, we do, of course, travel ether in certain trends. One of the nds today is toward the use of some- at more complex forms of congrega- al worship.

As a matter of fact this movement has n going on in Congregationalism from very beginning. Our generation is ely carrying it on at a somewhat more lerated speed. Those who scoff at ancelitis" today would no doubt have the scoffers at Geneva gowns, the rch-year, hymns, organs, choir proces- als, and traditional prayers, in times e by. Except in days of revolution, of man's normal efforts is toward the ual enrichment of form for the bet- expression of inward impulses. Not Congregationalists, but Presbyterians, thodists, Baptists, Episcopalians and rs are following this same trend.

lso it is true in non-Christian and n in non-religious circles. Perhaps the rement toward elaboration of form in gregationalism has gone far enough; e so believe. And we all know that re is great danger in form. It has a ination which may lead men on to ther the spirit with love of exterior rectness. But I have heard of few who ld go back to simpler ways by the osal of hymnody or of the celebration Christmas, or by ministers and choirs earing in church in sack suits or fancy . And if we do not move in one di- ion, it is hard to see how we can avoid ring in another. Surely no one is satis- with the situation at present, whose y distinctive feature is empty pews. frankly advocate a cautious experi- tation with forms which are either or at least comparatively new to Con- gationalists. I also advocate a deeper more prolonged thought upon the stry of certain of our present forms. not advocate form for form's sake, affirm strongly that form in worship t ever be controlled by theology. I k that we should all, even more often we do, reappraise the actual effec- ness of the forms we are using at present time as a means for the con- rations we serve to express the Chris- thoughts and impulses which are in them.

God has done more than his share in keeping the highway between man and himself open. His revelation to us is perfect, infinite in its beauty, variety, order, ingenuity and artistry. And I veritably believe that he has accomplished all of this creative magnificence only because he wanted to express himself to man. James Weldon Johnson has said, "God was lonely; so he created man." And, having created him, he lavished upon him the riches of his love. Our response to his love is intuitive. The cultivation and development of that intuition are the measures of our worship.

"Above the battling rock-storm of this world
Lies heaven's great calm, through which, as through a bell
Tolleth the tongue of God, eternally,
Calling to worship. Whoso hears that tongue,
Worships."

(Philip James Bailey, 1816–1902, in "Oxford Book of Eng. Mystical Verse," 213)

Let us, then, in response to God's love,—with all our means, all our forms, all our arts, as well as all our hearts,—worship God!

There are just a few of the arts, among others, that I wish to mention as being particularly capable of development as means of worship. My opinions are being expressed merely as opinions and to evoke your reactions. I am no expert in these lines, and am anxious to revise my opinions with your help.

II

One of the chief of the arts we use is architecture. Shape, lines, colors, the mysteries of depth, mass, height, space, are all conductors of the spirit of man. Outdoors there are always the great arch of the sky, the patterns of the mountains and clouds, the rhythm of the rocks and the dance of growing things. Indoors we can only suggest the majesty of nature; but surely one of the highways of the spirit of man toward God is the beauty of architectural form. This form, as also other forms, tends to condition our approach,

even possibly to modify (unless we are very strong-minded and capable in our abstract thinking) our theology. We must therefore beware of its use, for it can cheapen the concepts that many of our church members have of God, just as readily as it can enrich them. Whether our churches should be white on the interior, with bright unpainted glass, all open to the light; or whether they should present an air of dim mystery, is a question into which all ministers should inquire. To put a common and specific problem:—is Romanesque or Georgian (on the one hand) or Gothic (on the other) a better avenue of worship for most people in our own particular day and place?

There are no doubt values in each, the Romanesque and Greek styles giving emphasis to the "clear white light of reason," and the Gothic typifying a colorful and "dim, religious light." Each can be used, however, to bring out the fundamental aims of Christian worship. If one is given a Gothic church with which to deal,—great height and dark, many-hued windows,—the proper treatment is to bathe the sanctuary (or whole chancel) in artificial light. Mystery resides in such a church in any case; hence reason (by the lighting of the chancel), should be stressed. If, however, one is given a Georgian or Romanesque design,—clear glass windows and a domed or barrel-vaulted ceiling,—the thing to do is to increase or emphasize the height and the depth of the chancel. "Sweet reasonableness" resides in such a church already; thus should the air of mystery (by deepening and heightening the chancel) be introduced. In other words it is the treatment of the chancel which is the most important architectural problem in a church.

And this brings us to a consideration of the interior arrangement of a church and its furnishings. Should chairs or pews be so placed that people face other people, or nothing in particular, or some central object? If a central object, what should it be? And let us not forget that, as long as we are in the body and have our sense of sight, we must (in church as elsewhere) face something. And being constituted as we are, this visualized something does have an influence over our souls. A welter of unbalanced or disharmonized objects has one influence; a single, beautiful and significant object, or integrated group of significant objects has another.

III

Let me take my own church as an illustration of what I am trying to indicate. Most of you know it. In bodily structure it is of exceedingly great beauty. It is a church which gives the Victorian (sometimes mistakenly called the traditional Congregational) arrangement of furniture the best possible simple, dignified Georgian setting. There is the platform with the central pulpit, the towering throne for the minister, with empty chairs on each side, and a table for flowers. There is the central organ console, the largest piece of furniture in the church, the organist sitting back to back with the minister. There is the choir clustering around the console, facing the congregation. And back of them the false organ pipes, the central panel having recently been removed to insert a soft blue velvet curtain. There is nothing in particular to catch the eye of the worshiper, who is compelled to shift his attention from one thing to another, to none of which, as conductor of worship, has much thought been given. The Bible on the pulpit ought with this arrangement, to be the central symbol, but it is not very conspicuous. The communion table, in front of the platform, but without any central aisle leading to it, is not visible except from the first few rows of pews. The flowers (except when there is a bunch large enough to be placed on the communion table) can be seen by only half of the congregation. The dome, to be sure, adds a sense of peace and providence to the whole and is the most religious feature of the room. Although the church has a beauty which is really breath-taking, and it is a distinctly Christian beauty too, still the attention of the worshipers is not centered anywhere, and thus wandering thoughts and disjointed emotional experiences, rather than integrated worship, are I am afraid, fostered and encouraged.

Therefore I am of the opinion that a focal point, embodying some lofty and ennobling symbolism, should be present in every church as an aid toward con-

cting people's souls along the highway our God. Let the varying elements, rsons and actions of the service be subllinated to the central symbol except en they are brought forth and held in public attention for longer or briefer iods and for certain well thought out ! well defined and understood purposes. This central symbol should be one that !, as nearly as possible, embody the ole of Christian thought and feeling. r most of us this is summarized in the vice of Holy Communion. Even when mmunion is not being celebrated, its ology and ideology should be kept upmost. The Communion service, in its analysis, dramatizes the two great plementary ideas of Christianity, felship and sacrifice. Therefore two sym-s, close enough to be visualized toher in one glance, from anywhere in nave, are necessary, these two being ught into a unity by their contiguity. fellowship, is the table; for sacrifice, cross.

n spite of the recent movement among toward an altar (which I cannot but l has been led by architects rather than ologians,—though I recognize that there also sound theologians among us who or an altar) I do not incline toward altar and cross, because that is a double rifice symbol, leaving out the idea of owship altogether. This is particularly case when the altar is fixed to the ll of the church; and most particularly case when a reredos or high retable affixed. A minister who must celebrate mmunion before an altar places him-f in a position in which it is next to possible to emphasize the ideal of felrship. As a conductor of this value, a le is the most natural possible piece furniture. And for Christians especially re reside in it all the emotional power l association of our Lord's Last Supper h his disciples.

Around this table men may gather, ing each other and holding high comnion together. There should, I think, chairs behind it, a somewhat larger ,—but not of the dimensions of a one,—in the middle. Upon this chair Christ the minister should not hesitate sit during Communion service, for he s impersonate our Lord in the divine drama. The deacons cluster about in a friendly group, as did the apostles in the upper room. And surely there ought, in our services, to be occasions when laymen, too, could come right up into the sanctuary and either sit or kneel or stand in close enough proximity to the table to be able to imagine themselves in very truth as actors in that holy scene.

IV

But sacrifice must not be forgotten. There is more of the sacrifice idea in the Communion service than most of our rituals bring out. This should be more emphasized in the words than it usually is, I think; and it should also be symbolized by the dominant sign of the cross. The cross should not be placed upon the table as that would form a mixture of metaphors, so to speak. A table does not naturally bear a cross; only those utensils should be upon it which one would normally expect to find there. The cross, therefore, should be upon the wall, or a ledge, or woven upon the dossal curtain, directly above the table, just high enough not to be hidden by the chair or the minister as he sits in it, low enough down to be apprehended in one glance from the pews, and of the right size to suggest the equality of the ideal of sacrifice with that of fellowship. On the table may be candles, flowers, cups, dishes, but nothing in the center, the eye being carried by the emptiness of the central space to the chair of Jesus behind it and (in particular) his cross above. The cross may be either of wood or metal. The value of wood is that it tends to lead men's minds rather realistically back to the first stark and rugged cross on which Jesus died. Gleaming metal emphasizes the idea of victory and redemption. In any case the cross should be empty, to show the triumph of the resurrection rising above the sufferings of sacrifice.

I think it is inadvisable to place a picture of Jesus behind the table for several reasons. For one thing, a symbol is more powerful and has more universal appeal than a picture. For another, the picture chosen is all too likely to be an unworthy one, or at least thought to be so by many in the congregation. Finally, people get tired of looking at the same picture every

Sunday; but never at a simple symbol. Nothing else except a curtain, a wooden carving or a picture of Jesus should, however, ever be allowed behind the cross. To put the cross on a hanging before a pulpit is to make an anti-climax. And the custom of placing a national flag or a service flag in the central position in the church, even in war time, is (to say the least) highly unwarranted and disconcerting.

V

The pulpit, sign of reason, should be in evidence in every church, but in its proper place, which is subordinate. The Bible, sign of God's verbal revelation, should be in evidence, closer to the center than the pulpit but still not in the center, for the Bible is but the history, or the explanation, of the Table and the Cross. Flowers, sign of God's revelation in nature, should also be conspicuous, though not in the central place. The prayer bench should be in evidence as a place where the minister may represent the people on their knees in petition and intercession. The choir and stalls should be in evidence, but so arranged that the choristers may be at one with the other worshippers in singing to God. One of the worst of liturgical mistakes in common use in our services today, —one which the devil himself might almost have contrived as a successful means of diverting people's attention from God,—is the custom of having the choir sing concerts to the people. There should be no rail separating people and choir, or people and table. Or if there is a rail it should have a wide and always open central gate. But the table should be set far enough into the sanctuary to remove it from the ordinary tables of life and endow it with an air of mystery and sanctity; and a central aisle should lead up to it if possible. The minister's stall should be inconspicuous, as there is no reason why he should be seen when he is not engaged in speaking or leading some action; and the same should be true of the choristers.

Lighting the church is also a high art, almost entirely neglected. Dim light in the nave, except when people must see to read, and bright light in the sanctuary should, I think, be the general rule. Concentrated light on the cross and table dur ing the whole of the service would greatl help the people to realize their significanc and to enter, through their medium, int God's presence. This light should be o a slightly different color from that of th general sanctuary lighting effect. Anothe light might also be trained upon the mir ister and pulpit, or minister and lectern during sermon or Bible-reading time. A the lights should be controlled by rheosta and should be operated by an usher o spiritual and artistic insight.

Color, too, could very well be used mor than now to aid the people in their marc toward God. Changes of color with th changing Christian seasons could produc magnificent effect if a church had th means to manage it. The nave should b neutral,—blue or light brown. Color shoul be concentrated in the chancel; its dossa curtain, tablecloth, Bible and bookmark carpets, seat cushions, and gowns. Thoug we do not have any compulsion to follo traditional ecclesiastical colors, some var able scheme seems to me to be desirabl Red for Communion services, Penteco and All Saints' Day; Purple for Lent white for Easter, and perhaps Mother Day and certain other festivals; red an green for Advent and Christmas; gree for Trinity season, are suggestive of dif ferent possibilities that might be worke out.

VI

Music is of great importance in service. The choice of hymns and anthem often makes or unmakes the whole ton of the service. Many ministers, chorister music committees and even choirmaster are deficient here. Some music simpl turns the would-be worshiper back upo himself. Catchy, lilting, smooth-runnin tunes, with chromatic slides, may deligh the singers but do not take them into th presence of the majesty of God. Muc Victorian music is as non-conductive c worship as jazz; yet hardly any in th congregation and very few of the mir isters are aware of its failures. Our hymn books are still crowded with the mus of Dykes, Sullivan, Mason and Barnb and our anthem books with Stainer an Gaul. The choir likes this music becaus it gives them grand opera crescendos an

h E flourishes. The congregation likes ecause it reminds them of their child- d, "the little brown church in the vale," l certain other personal and subjective eriences. Often, for such reasons, such sic is demanded, and a minister may e to compromise his ideals. This uld not worry us unduly.

But a minister should make it his busi- s to know what constitutes good church ic and to note and analyze the effect music has on worship, and also seek ually to train his people. The music Bach, Palestrina, Byrd, Gibbons, the man Chorales, many of the folks tunes, Genevan Psalm-tunes, the English Re- ration music, and even Gregorian nts, and *some* Victorian music, espe- ly that of Samuel Wesley, are always able. This is the first age in the history the church when music of all these erent types is available, and we should e the most of our extraordinary op- tunity. Good music is coming back to church, but it is coming more slowly n good architecture. Yet, as an avenue approach toward God, it is equally as portant. As for the words of the hymns, standard is higher than music; still, s, in many instances, fortunate that the gregations are in the habit of not icing what they sing.

Many things more might be said. The er of worship itself should be re-ex- ined to see how it leads from one mood another. The posture, facial expression physical attitude of minister, deacons, irs ought also to be rethought. For tance, do crossed legs have a symbolic ning to cause so many ministers to pt that position? Worship in small ups and private worship, I have not attempted to touch upon at all. And all of you of course can, and I hope will, add your own observations and corrections to what I have said, and criticize freely, Many of my remarks are simple an expression of my personal preferences and have no more validity than that. I recognize that you have all thought about this problem as much as I; all of us are searchers together for better means of worship for the people whom God has placed under our care.

All Christians are fellow-travelers along the highway toward God. When approaching God alone each must follow (taking the advice and suggestions of others to be sure, but in the end relying upon his own best judgment) the road which experience shows to be best for himself. But when men worship together, they must be held in a unity by form. Too long have we Congregationalists declined to examine our forms to see if they are actually accomplishing their purpose. Now we are beginning to do so. Let none be content with old ways unless he has delved deep into the suggestions of the new and rejected them for good reasons. And let none neglect the forms of beauty which God has given us and which we can use and develop in his service and worship.

Let us, then, by all the means available to us, make smooth the highway to our God.

> "Bless the Lord, O my soul! Let *all* that is within me bless his holy name." (Ps. 103.) "Then shall the lame man leap, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. And an highway shall be there, and a way; and it shall be called the way of holiness." (Isa. 35.)

A PRAYER FOR THE PRESENT

O God, whose fixed and changeless laws govern the universe, we are swept along today on the relentless tide of history. May we study to know and to recognize in their various guises the forces at work in the world; may we learn to distinguish the good from the evil, to put out of our own hearts all prejudices that divide men of different races and creeds. May we face today's realities with courage and cultivate a singleness of purpose and a determination to do our full part in building a more stable and a happier world.

UNA W. HARSEN, Haworth, N. J.

Liberal Christianity in the Army

Chaplain Paul W. Yinger

IT is the responsibility of a chaplain in the U. S. Army to provide religious services for all the major religious denominations and whenever possible for those sects which have forms of worship distinct from the general pattern of Protestant worship.

While a chaplain is obliged to see that all men are ministered to by chaplains of their respective faiths, the individual chaplain, in the services he conducts and in the sermons he preaches, cannot honestly be "all things to all men." A chaplain can accommodate himself only so far. He must interpret Christianity in the terms which are meaningful to him. When such terms are not congenial to some of the men in his unit, he must do what he can to locate services which will be satisfying to the men who require a varying approach to their religion.

It has been impressed upon my mind very forcefully that the majority of Protestant chaplains (and therefore the majority of Protestant men) are of the conservative tradition. It is a fact which one should have recognized long ago—that most Protestant Christians have been trained and taught a conservative theology. However, I had never thought about it until I became a chaplain in the army. Then it became clear to me that most men had never heard of Biblical criticism and had done little thinking about Christianity except with their emotions.

At first I was a little uncertain how to proceed. For example, I have been very careful in my ministry of the kind of hymns I chose for a service. Although one cannot eliminate every offensive sentiment and theological absurdity from the hymnody of the church, it is right, I think, that hymns be chosen with thought as to their religious content.

However, men like to sing the "old tunes." So I crossed my fingers and introduced some pagan hymns into the services. I couldn't do it for long, however. Soon I realized that I was feeling hypocritical because I was bowing to popular taste. If there is any place where one should avoid mere acceptance of popular taste it is in the church. Expediency in the end defeats the objective toward which one is driving in worship: Thou shalt worship Him in spirit and in truth.

There had to be undertaken, therefore, a program of education in hymnody. The process is not complete. Yet we have succeeded in teaching, to men who had not heard them before, such hymns as "God of Our Fathers, Whose Almighty Hand," and "Be Still, My Soul," to the tune Finlandia. "Fairest Lord Jesus" and "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" are frequently used. It is my opinion that many people are made immune to Christ by the sentimental conditioning provided by some of the old hymns of the church. They mistake an emotional glow for religious conviction.

In the matter of preaching, the problem is a bit different. I could not preach "a good old gospel sermon" if I tried—and I would not try. That does not mean that I do not try to preach the Gospel to the best of my knowledge and ability. But I have never quite known what Paul or his successors meant when they said they preached nothing but Christ and him crucified. Paul was a great preacher and writer who could eternally vary his great theme. Too few, however, are gifted in such a way that they can tell "the same old story" with perpetual interest.

Therefore (possibly because of the limitation of my creative capacity to "preach the gospel") I have sought to teach sometimes by indirection. Recently a great many men have come to me with serious marital problems. Ten thousand miles from home it is difficult to keep marriages happy. Innumerable problems arise. So I prepared a sermon on "Marriage, Love, and the Family." The response was somewhat gratifying. I preached a series of sermons in which I used Dr. William Stidger's idea of sermons from books. I used Edna St. Vincent Millay's *Renascence,* Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables,* and Lloyd C. Douglas'

The Robe. Later I preached on the lives of two Christian statesmen, Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln. At the service in which Lincoln was the subject of the sermon, instead of having the usual order of service, phonograph records of "The Ballad for Americans," as sung by Paul Robeson, were used preliminary to the sermon.

The sermon on *The Robe* took the entire hour. A musical prelude and postlude, and the use of music in various places in the sermon, were the only other parts of the service.

Interspersed between such sermons as I have mentioned were expository Bible sermons, topical sermons, and sermons on Christian theology.

These comments are not meant to suggest that our services have been far-reaching in their usefulness. However, they express my conviction that a man must speak in the way which is native to him without an unnatural attempt at accommodation.

There is one other aspect of a liberal ministry which I should like to mention. The petty vices of men in the army can be the source of separating a chaplain from the men in his unit. He can make so much of the cigarette, the bottle of beer, or the Varga girls which universally decorate the tents and clubs of men in the army that he forgets the weightier matters of honor, courage, and devotion. There is an art (which I know about but don't practice too well) in being able to move among men without their putting on a false face for the chaplain. At the same time, however, the chaplain who makes believe he approves of everything is a traitor to his cause. There are some chaplains I know who can change the environment in which they move without seeming to be professional joy killers.

It is my observation that the more liberal chaplains emphasize more than others the contradiction in which we are caught: On the one hand we are doing what must be done. On the other hand we are not righteous because of what we are doing. The sensitive Christian conscience realizes the universal involvement in the sins of the world, but at the same time accepts the necessity of acting in this historical drama.

I feel more hopeful about the possibility of a liberal ministry than I ever have before. Out here in New Guinea there are opportunities to make the church a live and versatile institution.

Sources of Spiritual Reality and Power

The Rev. Wilfrid A. Rowell
Beloit, Wisconsin

Thoughts in preparation for and use in the Lenten season.

IN these times there should be more than a traditional use of the Lenten season in giving emphasis to the teaching and ministry of Jesus. There ought to be found in it a fresh sense of spiritual reality and power with which to meet the special challenge of these days to Christians and to the church. The revival of formal and conventional ideas will not help us as Christians to lead the world from war to peace, nor from the evils of our day to the good we all desire. Jesus offered to his disciples in every age the wisdom and spiritual power needed for all their responsibilities. This failure of conventional forms and ceremonies to secure these essential forces of life is apparent to all. There is much talk and discussion and writing *about* religion and worship but too little religious living and action.

A group of ministers recently met together to consider the problem of how to help themselves and other people to get the spiritual fire and its expression so as to make the Christian life a transforming power in the world. This common aspiration and thinking led to the following approaches as most real and vital.

1. *The creation of the sense of the reality and present power of God as communicated through prayer.*

There is a great deal of talk about prayer. There are many sermons and books about prayer, but little prevailing prayer by individuals or church groups. Corporate prayer by Christians is at a minimum. We need to be reminded that the first act of the early followers of Jesus was to meet to pray together. This they did constantly in order to receive the power of God. They always received what they sought for, "And the Holy Spirit fell upon them."

The first essential in the preparation for the Lenten season and the best use of it is the gathering together of little groups for prayer. Techniques are important, but the most important guide is found in the direction of Jesus in this matter, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Let the church pray, seeking the guiding and inspiring power of God in the life of the individual, the church and the world. It always works.

This fellowship of prayer created a deepening love for each other. It immediately aroused a sensitiveness to each other's material needs. They immediately shared with each other the common necessities of life. There was immediately a Christian social action! This devotion on the material level was a source of spiritual power. We are helped to remember that common fellowship and sympathy are also sources of spiritual power.

2. *Moral and spiritual struggle.* There must be some battle with the forces that hinder spiritual growth. Without it both Christians and churches grow weak. The chief sources of spiritual weakness are pride and the desire for a comfortable life. In recognition of these facts, Jesus urged the necessity of humility and self sacrifice. These least esteemed of the Christian virtues are the hardest to cultivate. They constitute one of life's greatest moral and spiritual battle fields, and victory yields great spiritual power. Strength comes from what seem to be life's weakest points—humility and sacrifice and suffering. St. Francis caught it when he kissed the hand of the leper; Peter when he met the Roman Centurion as a brother. This is a most essential and fruitful field for prayer, study, meditation and heroic action during the Lenten season.

3. *Spiritual reality and power come from witnessing to the power of Christ in our own lives.* The early Christians immediately went out to be witnesses of the love and power of Christ. There was a deep and driving evangelistic urge. The result was not only the winning of people to follow Christ. It was also the growth of new power in the witness. We need to remember it is our duty to be witnesses and that if we neglect this duty, we grow weak spiritually. The Christian life is a rhythm. It is like breathing. The rhythm of receiving the new life in Christ and pouring it out to others stirs to life and power the living, creative forces within. He who receives and refuses to give soon becomes spiritually dead. All church members should be instructed in this truth and trained in its practice.

4. *Spiritual reality and power come from burning words inflaming the heart.* At Pentecost Peter's preaching was a great transforming, energizing force. He had the spiritual glow that warmed the souls of his hearers. He passed on to others the love that Jesus gave to him. To the group who did not understand the meaning of Jesus in history nor to themselves, Peter brought the light of truth and the desire to be like Jesus. This was the flame of love that lighted and warmed their souls and transformed them.

To do this for men today is one of the great opportunities of the Lenten season. Everyone has some spark of spiritual life waiting to be fanned into a flame. One of the greatest tasks of the preacher is to find the point at which the soul catches fire and the kind of a torch that lights it. It is only the loving heart that can set another on fire. Jesus once pictured his own ministry in these terms—"I am come to bring fire on the earth."

The path to spiritual reality is not so hard to see, but it is difficult to climb. Anyone can begin the ascent. Each step makes one stronger to take the next. Some of the steps we may begin to take are those of prayer and fellowship, moral

and spiritual struggle, bearing witness to the love of Christ in our hearts and the speaking with the tongue of fire.

In presenting these thoughts, the results of our group thinking, we realize that we are doing again what at the beginning we criticized others for doing—talking too much about religion with too little action. But we declare our purpose to act!

Finally, Brethren—

The Rev. Ferdinand Q. Blanchard, D.D.
Sometime Moderator, The National Council Congregational Christian Churches

YOUR request for some observations on the Moderatorship in retrospect recalls visits which began with New England when the autumn colors still lingered and in the north the first snow was on the mountains. They closed with Grand Rapids where the record breaking heat was a bit noticeable but was forgotten in the warmth of good fellowship. As might be surmised travel in the war years was not easily carried on. Difficulties were largely reduced, however, by the unremitting efforts of Dr. Davies, and if trains were late one seldom went hungry. I shall not forget a trip to the middle West with its terminus in Dr. Horning's hospitable church where the Kansas Conference assembled, which included a visit upon that prince among us, Stoddard Lane, but a fortnight before his gallant heart ceased to beat. Nor shall I ever cease to remember four feet of snow in the mountains of California turning back Superintendent Drier and myself from one appointment, and the torrential rains that threatened to engulf the car in which Mr. Schrock was heroically trying to drive us through to San Diego and which finally forced us to return to his hospitable home for the night.

But the dust, *detritus* and *disjecta membra* of travel are not the essence of the experience. Among the recollections which are truly significant I would set down first, something which I have made occasion to mention more than once, the general high level in respect to good works and good temper which distinguishes the administration of our church affairs today. I mention this not merely to make a pleasant gesture, but because I actually found as I went and came among the churches that these qualities were outstanding. I had expected to discover during the War years (and it may be recalled that I took office six months after Pearl Harbor) a certain lack of enthusiasm and perhaps of interest in the tasks of the churches. On the contrary I can recall no gatherings which did not exceed expectations in numbers, and none at which there was not mingled with a loyal absorption in the War tasks, a vigorous prosecution of the special tasks to which the churches, and the churches alone are committed.

Everywhere, there sounded a strong note of encouragement and faith in the future. We may have before us some heavy going as we take our part in reconstructing a shattered world, but I cannot but believe that our churches will engage in this task with their loins girded and their lights burning.

I found, of course, the deepest interest in the questions which center around the men returning from Service. There was and is a most earnest desire to do all that is possible and best to create the atmosphere into which the returning serviceman will be glad to come. We must all find satisfaction in the fact that there is no insensitiveness to the possibility of new conditions and no disposition to ignore any of the problems. It is, however, my own conviction that there will be less need than we imagine for something new and different in the program of church life.

Few boys will return exactly as they went away. But those who cared for and were part of the church will come back to care for it and be part of it. Some perhaps who ignored it will have gotten a new sense of spiritual values. I suspect that a great number who never cared will still continue not to care. But I am of the opinion that it is too late in Christian

history to make any bizarre discoveries as to what constitutes a church that blesses its community. I may be misunderstood in putting it briefly, but I shall venture the statement, that we need the old Gospel together with an ever renewed spirit of consecration to help meet the ancient needs of a human soul.

Among the enterprises of the churches and ministers which awakened my particular interest was the fresh enthusiasm for a clearcut understanding of the essentials of faith as evidenced among our younger men in the movement of "Christus Victor." Some of us remember that a vast amount of energy has been expended on what might be called "tinkering with the machinery." We recall with what lament and irritation it used to be pointed out that we had the initials of seven organizations to master. I often wonder what those who sorrowed over this fact are saying now with the myriad governmental organizations with initials which have sprung up in our War effort. But the mood which counted it a poor year in which we did not change some part of our machinery seems to me to have largely passed, among our younger men at least. They are more notably concerned with the formulation of the Gospel in terms which can be understood and generally accepted.

I have received more than one letter from chaplains who regretted that it was not perfectly easy to set forth the Protestant belief, as the Roman Catholic sets forth his view. In the very nature of the Protestant position, which lays emphasis on life, not organization, it is not possible for the Protestant to state a faith "once for all delivered to the saints." But it is certainly possible to state eternal truth in the light of modern thinking and in a form which shall be as definite and as clear as when Calvinistic thought was a possible and honest interpretation against the background of the human knowledge of its day. The association which I had, although all too brief, with some of the younger men interested in this movement, convinced me that the conclusions which they had reached were not final ones, but that they were following a course which reflects the vital life of religion in any era, and the particular needs of the time in which we live.

When looking back over my two years as Moderator I set them against the background in my memory of my first experience with the churches over forty years ago, I am assured that there is today a much more active sense of fellowship and a more active cooperation through our denominational life. Our churches at the turn of the century were deeply interested in the various missionary enterprises which had developed in the preceding century. They came together in the great meetings which the Boards individually held each year. But the National Council was not the high festival of fellowship it is today. Dr. Amory Bradford, who served as Moderator in 1901–04, was the first man holding that office who definitely conceived it in the terms beyond that of the presiding officer of what was then a triennial gathering. The warmth of welcome I experienced everywhere, in no sense personal but because of the office I was honored to hold, certainly indicated the growth of interest in our common history and common duties, and a loyalty as vigorous as it was unforced.

I doubt much if this to which I refer could be regarded as the reflection of the present emphasis in some quarters on ecumenicity. That is still primarily a preoccupation of church leaders. The rank and file speak respectfully but not enthusiastically about it. But I am glad to believe there is an ever widening sense of the contribution the democratic idea can make to the process of making the world Christian. It means also increasing regard for the great heritage possessed by the churches which are lineal descendants of the Mayflower pact. We have always been distinguished for our willingness to cooperate with Christians anywhere. We seem now to be conscious of the contribution we have to make which we are determined shall not be lost in any future realignments of church life.

Congregationalists have always been suspicious of ecclesiastical authority. They have wisely seen to it that their Moderator shall be empowered to exercise none. But they give him something infinitely finer, the friendship of kindly and sympathetic hearts. My own experience has been immeasureably enriched by this great gift.

The Department of the Ministry

THE Congregational Christian Churches are sponsoring a new venture in Protestantism under the title of "The Department of the Ministry."

The organization is simple and the financial requirements, for the present at least, are modest. For the first two years the plan provides for half-time service of the Associate Secretary of the General Council and the full-time service of an office assistant. The total budget, including the salaries of the above with allowance for printing, travel, conferences and incidental expenses, is estimated at $10,000. One-half of this amount is to be provided by the General Council, if necessary out of reserves, and the other half largely by the Board of Home Missions and from State Conferences and other denominational agencies. This piecemeal financing is done to avoid the complexities which would arise in setting aside a fractional percent of the apportionment.

This may be thought of as a small beginning for so pretentious an undertaking as a national Department of the Ministry, but the truth of the matter is that the work of the department during these first two years is to be largely exploratory and a possible correlation of the work now being done by several well-organized denominational agencies which are staffed and financed. These agencies include departments related to recruiting in the Board of Home Missions, the Pension Boards, the Placement Agencies of the New England Board of Pastoral Supply, the Mid-West Ministerial Committee, the Summer School for Pastors of the Board of Home Missions and the General Council's Commission on the Ministry.

The Director is in no sense a supervisory official, but rather the chairman of a board of strategy for the bettering of the status and the work of the ministry. The members of this board are those working in this general field under the entire authority of their respective employing agencies. This is an experiment in democracy. We are believers in the theory —now we shall see how, in this particular situation, democracy works. So far the results have been excellent. Everyone related to the total task is cooperating to the fullest possible extent.

Several "Ministers' Round Tables" have been held since the Department was authorized in Grand Rapids in June, 1944. No doubt there are many other general as well as particular questions relating to the work of the ministry which should be considered and they will be given attention. Comments on the general plan for the Department will be welcomed by this office which from now on is to be the office particularly concerned with the total life and work of the ministry. Here we shall have available the best books and magazines on the work of the ministry for constant study, and better than this we have now on the Commission and on the cooperative Staff, men with wide experience who are ready and willing to advise and to help their brethren. Letters of inquiry are kept confidential. Personal calls are invited. We are determined that every minister in this wide land shall feel that here is an open door and a sympathetic and understanding welcome for him in his time of need.

A First Century "Agapae" Today

The Rev. Perry Dickinson Avery
First Congregational Christian Church, Kokomo, Indiana

IT was the evening of Holy Thursday. People quietly entered the large Upper Room of the First Congregational Christian Church of Kokomo, Indiana, as rich old hymns were played on our reed organ. The light of candles filled the room with a soft glow. The tables, arranged in the shape of a long cross, were very simply set with a spoon, a small glass of grape juice at each place, and

plates of unleavened bread. Jewish matzos. At the head of the Cross stood a vacant chair for the Unseen Guest, before which was placed a plate and chalice of pewter.

The setting cast a reverential spell over those who had come to partake of a 20th Century "Agapae," or "Love Feast."

* * *

As people were seated at the table a hush pervaded the room. Then the minister's voice called his people to worship. His invocation:

"God, make my heart a place where evening shadows
Fall in tender quietness and healing rest,
When haste and time are gone, and passion stilled
With memories that music hath caressed.

Send just a few last rays of evening sunshine
To light a gleam of joy as life's reward!
Send just a smile of kindness in the evening
To show my life with Thine in full accord.

Leave me alone awhile within the twilight,
After the day of fickle fortune's won,
With just Thy presence shining in the shadows,
And music telling that the day is done."

Herbert H. Hines.

The choir, seated at the arm of the cross, then chanted the Lord's Prayer, and from memory the congregation repeated the 23rd Psalm. They all joined in the "Gloria Patri," praising the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The deacons entered the room with bowls of hot rice soup containing celery and meat stock, and, as they served, the people sang from memory "Break Thou the Bread of Life."

Friendly conversation prevailed during the frugal meal. Afterwards the minister read the story of Christ feeding the multitude from Mark's Gospel, chapter 8, verses 1 to 9, and all were reminded that Christ was then Host. The congregation sang again from memory "Jesus Calls Us" and "Rock of Ages" and while heads were bowed all prayed in the words of our Master as the minister read the 17th chapter of John's Gospel. And again they sang "Sweet Hour of Prayer."

Continuing in the spirit of prayer, the minister read the words of "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind" and all became conscious of the picture, hanging behind the vacant chair, of Hoffman's "Gethsemane."

"It was alone the Saviour prayed
In dark Gethsemane;
Alone He drained the bitter cup
And suffered there for me."

The minister recalled the story of early Christian Communions and the church which met in the home of Priscilla and Aquila at Ephesus, in the home of Philemon at Laodicea, in the home of Lydia at Philippi and the Catacombs of Rome. Then he read the words of Institution as given by Paul and the people were called to Communion:

"Thou sittest at the table's head,
Our Host with whom we sup,
Thy hand it is that breaks the bread
And pours for us the cup.

And all who come remembering Thee
Are welcome at the feast,
For here is hospitality,
For greatest and for least.

The shadow of Thy cross still lies
Upon the festal board,
No thought can plumb Thy sacrifice,
No pen Thy griefs record.

Yet clothes, our risen Lord, with light
Of everlasting day,
Still to Thy feast Thou dost invite
And none is turned away.

O may Thy mystic bread and wine
Sustain us as we go
That life from out the living vine
Through every branch may flow!"

Susan S. Hubbell

The Last Supper was observed using the same elements as those of the meal —unleavened bread and grape juice. And

e hearts of all were lifted in a prayer supplication for the sufferings of mankind.

) heart that beats of every human heart,
) heart that beats of every human tear,
) heart that beats of every human song,
o fill our hearts with the flood tides of Thy love
hat they may beat with every human heart,
hat they may weep with every human tear,
hat they may sing with every human song,
nd thus through Thee unite with all mankind."

Then in a Bidding Prayer the sufferings of humanity were called to mind and the responsibility and opportunity for aid through the Church. The congregation then rose and, led by the minister, passed around the table, leaving their sacrificial offering at the place of the Unseen Host.

"The Holy Supper is kept, indeed,
In whatso we share with another's need;
Not what we give, but what we share,
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three,—
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and Me."

From "The Vision of Sir Launfal!" by Lowell

Finally as hands were joined the group sang "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" and the minister pronounced the benediction.

The "Book Sermon"

The Rev. Elmer S. Freeman
First Congregational Church, Menasha, Wis.

MOST of us, the common or garden variety of parish parsons, steer clear of doing much, if ny, book reviewing from our pulpits. ach of us would present, on request, is own list of reasons. We may feel that ur congregations are entitled to have ur own best thinking put before them n our sermons and not (except in background or by way of illustration) someone else's. We may believe that relatively few books of any one year's crop re seriously important enough to justify he use of sermon time. Or we may have ther reasons equally cogent. The fact emains that, in general, the pulpit gives ut little guidance to the pew in the ecommendation of worthwhile books to ead, and the pew usually looks elsewhere han to the pulpit for advice in the selection of books worth reading.

Even though the parson may feel that ook reviewing, as such, ought not to onstitute any part of his preaching program, he may still wish to do something bout some books to bring them to the ttention of his people. One possible way f doing so is the device of what I call the "Book Sermon," given either occasionally throughout the year or in a series at some special season, or both. This article is an attempt to find the rationale of this kind of preaching, and to suggest some kinds of books which may be considered by preachers to whom the idea seems to make sense.

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Any book, of course, can be reviewed, and practically all of them are. When a responsible publishing house thinks well enough of a book to risk its own money (and, nowadays, its paper quota) to print it, presumably it contains enough substance of some kind to warrant more or less extensive review. It does not follow, however, that every book, even among those of general rather than specialized appeal, would be a suitable subject for a book *sermon*. There are, I think, some general principles which can be invoked to govern the choice of books worth preaching about, rather than simply reviewing.

Obviously, books chosen as subjects

for preaching should not be those written merely for entertainment. One would not choose "whodunits," or what the reviewers call hammock novels, or escape fiction. One would not, either, use a book of humor, as such, although, as I once heard a debater say, "even a serious argument is not necessarily unimportant because it is cheerfully phrased." Nor would even the most fascinating travel or adventure narrative ordinarily be a suitable subject for a book sermon. It is no disparagement of books of these sorts to say that we should not wish to use them as subjects of book sermons. They all have their proper places; they are simply not relevant here.

Again, in choosing books as subjects for book sermons one would be at pains to eliminate the merely ephemeral. This rule, perhaps, needs to be interpreted with some flexibility, since it is possible that a vital book of real importance might deal with an event or issue of great, though temporary, moment, and thus warrant serious pulpit comment. The more solid and intelligent books on post-war planning which are being published so plentifully just now might be cited as examples of justifiable exceptions to this general rule. They deal with problems admittedly fluid and subject to further modification almost with the next day's turn of events. In a period of from three to five years they will all be out of date. Yet because they deal with matters which are absolutely vital at this time some of them may merit choice for book sermons, if they meet the standards in other respects.

Still another negative criterion which may properly be applied is that we would not choose to preach about a book the principal appeal of which lies in its style rather than in its substance. This test also needs to be applied with some caution and discretion. As between two books of approximately equal substantial value, one written in dull and the other in sprightly style, one would naturally choose the latter. But there would be no adequate warrant for preaching about a book (though there might be for reviewing it) if its major merit were beautiful writing.

Anthologies or books of composite authorship should also rarely be used, I think, for book sermons, since they necessarily lack the unifying thread of one man's thinking which makes it possible for a congregation easily to follow the thought. Even here, of course, there may be exceptions, such as, for example, at least one book which will be mentioned later in this article.

On the side of positive qualifications, it may be mentioned that books chosen as the subjects of book sermons would normally be of general rather than specialized nature. Though a typical Christian congregation would probably be, as an audience, distinctly more homogeneous in its thinking than a general audience representative of a whole community, it would still present sufficient diversity of thinking and cultural backgrounds to make it necessary to use the general rather than the specialized subject and appeal. One would hardly choose a book of sermons, for example, or a book on some particular Christian doctrine or practice; these would be suitable for use in study or discussion groups, but not in the pulpit.

Perhaps the most important general—and positive—criterion governing the wise selection of a book for a book sermon is that, while it need not by any means be specifically a religious book, it must be a book which, whatever its genre—whether fiction, biography, public affairs, drama, or some other—*is capable of sustaining a broadly religious interpretation of its central message.* It is no handicap, naturally, if a book is well written, or tells an interesting or dramatic story about credible people, or has elements of humor and pleasantry. But for the purpose of making a book worth preaching about—again, as distinct from reviewing—these are "extras," works of supererogation. The basic reason one preaches a book sermon about a given book is that one can, without doing violence to its main trend, find something religious, in the wider sense, to say about it.

II

If what has so far been said is true, it becomes clear that the technique of preaching about a book is not quite the same as the technique of reviewing it in the usual sense.

There is a considerable area, of course,

wherein the methods used would be similar. If the book in question were a novel, both the review and the preacher would give some outline of the plot. In a biography, both would make clear the main facts of the subject's life and career. Concerning a book on current affairs, both would summarize the author's principal conclusions. Discussion of a play would elicit from both reviewer and preacher some account of character development (as would also discussion of a novel).

Nevertheless, there would also be differences. Obviously, the reviewer would give more attention to considerations of style and diction than would the preacher. The latter would pass lightly over descriptive passages, though they might be of great literary beauty. In biography, the reviewer might emphasize details of ancestral background or childhood incident which would be extraneous to the main interest of the preacher. In the field of public affairs, the preacher would perhaps be more likely to attempt an evaluation of the writer's conclusions than would the reviewer. In fiction or drama, the reviewer would more probably describe the character development of persons in the book in terms of their relationships to one another, while to the preacher that character development might more probably be measured against the standard of an ideal.

These and other distinctions of method which will occur to anyone mark some of the differing approaches which the reviewer and the preacher would normally make to the same piece of writing.

III

The present writer has, for some years, preached four to eight book sermons a year. Four or five of these have usually been given during one of the summer months. Response on the part of congregations has always been good enough to cancel out, at least in measurable degree, the usually severe summer slump in attendance. The summer series has ordinarily included a novel or a drama, a biography, a book on current affairs and one definitely religious or philosophical book. The other book sermons have been given during the year, at times when a book has appeared which seems to warrant such use.

Some of the books used may be of interest. There are some, of course, which almost compel the preacher to take pulpit note of them,—"The Nazarene" and "The Apostle," for example, Both are, however, so long that it seemed necessary to make two consecutive sermons of each,—ordinarily not a desirable plan. Probably almost every minister has preached a sermon on Lloyd Douglas' "The Robe," if for no other reason than that of the wide reading it has received by Christian people in general. I have been tempted to use Thomas Mann's "Joseph" novels for a series of book sermons, but have so far refrained, largely because of the great difficulty of condensing such long, tightly-knit narratives into manageable units. I fear, too, that such a series might become monotonous to many people.

Biography is a subject which presents superlative opportunities for book sermons. Over the last five years I have used the following, counting backward from 1944:

"Yankee From Olympus" (Justice Holmes)
"George Washington Carver"
"Small Town Boy" (Rufus Jones, an autobiography)
"Louisiana Hayride" (Huey Long)
"Pedlar's Progress" (Bronson Alcott)

Four of these are studies of persons almost completely admirable in themselves. The fifth, Huey Long, was in most respects a thorough-going rogue, yet at the same time a character of wide human appeal in some intimately personal ways. That sermon gave opportunity, too, for saying something about the place Christian people ought to take in public affairs, and the danger to social values when socially irresponsible people occupy high offices.

Fiction is certainly a legitimate part of such a program of preaching. I have not felt it necessary always to choose the most popular novel of the year. This summer, for example, I considered "Strange Fruit," but chose instead Rex Warner's "Return of the Traveller," a semi-philosophical novel about a soldier, killed in

battle, who in spirit form returns to the land of the living to ask people in various stations of life the question "Why was I killed?" It may or may not become a best seller, but it is more than ordinarily worth reading. Another novel, not a best seller, which I used some years ago was "The Outward Room," by Millen Brand, a novel with a psychological background and a great deal of sensitiveness and beauty. On the other hand, I have used, in other years, widely read books in the field of fiction like William Saroyan's "The Human Comedy." To make such selections and to ignore others is, of course, simply another way of saying that every preacher who uses fiction for book sermons at all will make choices on the basis of his own tastes and predilections, though always, one hopes, within the framework of the general criterion—"capable of sustaining a broadly religious interpretation of its central message"—previously suggested.

Books—and important books—on current public affairs, particularly in such times of tension and crisis as these, are simply legion. Choice of the best ones among them is extremely difficult. Sometimes one chooses a book with a clear religious bias, like "The Christian Bases for World Order" issued after the Delaware Conference, or Van Kirk's "Religion and the World of Tomorrow," or Paul Hutchinson's more recent book "From Victory to Peace." Or one may use a book which presents principally the economic and political viewpoint, though not without sympathy for moral and spiritual values, such as E. H. Carr's "Conditions of Peace" of a year or two ago. Among a multitude of possible choices just now, one seems to me to be outstanding,—Mortimer J. Adler's "How to Think About War and Peace," which I used in this summer's series.

In the field of religious books, likewise, a very great variety of books is available. Yet a word of caution may not be amiss here; a book is not necessarily a good subject for a book sermon just because it is a good religious book. It may be, as was suggested before, too specialized. (I should not preach on a book about the Lord's Supper, for example.) It may be too professional. (That preacher would be nothing less than a genius who could reduce Niebuhr's magnum opus "The Nature and Destiny of Man" to an intelligible book sermon for the average congregation.) It may be too—a number of things—conventional, for one, saying over again what, to be sure, needs to be said over again, but which the people would rather hear in their minister's own words. "On Being a Real Person," Harry Emerson Fosdick's great book of a year ago, or Harris Franklin Rall's "Christianity" seem to me excellent choices, though the latter is perhaps on the edge of the "too professional" class.

One might go on indefinitely, for the possibilities for fine, discriminating preaching in this field are almost endless. One can sometimes use drama; I once used Sherwood's play "There Shall Be No Night." The field of sociology contributed "Middletown in Transition" to one series. In another I used Marjorie Rawlings' "Cross Creek," a perfectly delightful book, though it would be an exception to the general rule of not using "travel" books. From the pen of a deeply religious philosopher, Professor Hocking, I chose one year that excellent little book "What Man Can Make of Man." A series, or an occasional book sermon, on books generally regarded as "classics," either in religion or general literature, is an intriguing possibility, though I have never yet tried it.

If, as Bacon said, "Reading maketh a full man," the preacher ought not to neglect the possibility of introducing his congregation to reading worth while. And the book sermon is surely one means to that end.

Concerning the Ministry

The Rev. Alfred Grant Walton, D.D.

President, Board Home Missions, New York City

ONE of the major problems confronting the Christian church is the problem of securing new recruits for the ministry. The problem is not new. It has been with us for a long time and is giving denominational leaders considerable concern. There are 5908 ministers in regular standing in the Congregational Christian churches of the United States of which 3090 are pastors. The other 2818 are made up of ministers who are retired, college and theological professors, denominational missionaries and secretaries, a number who have gone into business and some of miscellaneous classification. The pastoral group especially engages our attention. For the last twenty-nine years the Congregational denomination has lost more men than were ordained. Last year, to be specific, there were 39 more deaths than ordinations. The Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. has been facing a similar ministerial shortage, and this condition has prevailed for ten years. There are eleven Presbyterian seminaries in the United States enrolling 700 students and yet the Presbyterians are burying 70 more ministers each year than they ordain, and they are picking up 25 each year from other denominations. The records of other denominations will show similar conditions. Faced with an urgent need for men in widespread areas there is a considerable amount of competitive appeal among the various religious groups. Episcopalians get a goodly number each year from the Congregationalists. One denomination gets more than fifty per cent of her ministers from other communions. Truly the laborers are few and the competition plenteous. But if the Christian church is to go on, if it is going to fill its role effectively in the post-war world it must have leaders, leaders imbued with the passion and purpose of Christ, leaders of high capacity and intellectual acumen who will consecrate themselves to the work of the Kingdom of God and take up the burdens which the ministers of the present generation must ultimately lay down. It is obvious, therefore, that in giving our attention to the problem of recruiting for the Christian ministry, we are dealing with one of the major issues confronting the Christian church today.

I

It will be apparent to all that service in the Christian ministry is by no means the only way that we can serve in the cause of Christ. There has been too much emphasis on the ministry as a profession set apart from other fields of Christian activity, too much of the idea that it is in the category of a sacred profession as over against other secular professions. A good deal of stress is now being given to the idea of Christian vocation. Every sincere Christian should consider his chosen field of endeavor in the light of Christian service. The physician should see himself not simply as a physician but as a Christian physician. The lawyer should consider the legal profession in the light of its opportunities for a Christian lawyer. For a church member who is fully dedicated to the ideals for which the church stands, no work is secular, whether he is a plumber or a professor, a saxophone player or a social service worker. There is no real difference between the Christian engineer and the Christian clergyman except that the latter deals with higher things. With full recognition of this important truth, we still may justly limit our considerations to men who are to give themselves to the work of preachers and pastors, of home and foreign missionaries and as directors of religious education.

Fifty years ago, it was the commonly accepted point of view that if a man entered the ministry he should do so only in response to a "call." But what constitutes a call? In many instances it was a hastily formed judgment, born out of a highly emotional experience, perhaps a dream, perhaps a vision, the origin of

which might be found in the appeal of some Bible-thumping evangelist, or even an attack of indigestion. I am not going to repeat the old story of the candidate who saw the flaming letters G P C in the skies. The anecdote is sufficiently old to deserve a peaceful interment, but its point is relevant, it might be pointed out that if that seeking soul had decided to "go plant corn" instead of going out to preach Christ, he still could have had a true sense of Christian vocation.

But there is a sense in which one may speak of his careful selection of the Christian ministry as a life work as an answer to "a call." When a young man has a passion for Christ and His kingdom in his heart, when he is sensitive to his own intellectual attainments and his personal capacities and becomes aware that in the Christian ministry more than in any other field he can put such abilities to their greatest use, he may consider that the open door of opportunity is his call to enter. Now a call to the ministry implies a personal relation between the individual and God in which conscious effort on the part of others plays no important role. Yet if leaders of the Church have the work of Christ's kingdom at heart and wish to see it go forward, they will certainly be remiss in their duties if they do not make every effort in their power to bring young men to this important decision and to the challenge of full time Christian service as a life work.

II

There are certain practical considerations that must be recognized by any young man who contemplates entering the ministry and by any group that seeks to persuade young men to enter the ministry. The first is an economic factor. We are well aware that man does not live by bread alone and yet even the most altruistic and high-minded among us must have some bread and butter if he wishes to survive. The Episcopal clergyman in Memphis, Tennessee, who a few years ago decided to live on spiritual food alone discovered his metabolism seriously impaired. To get food and shelter a man must earn it or he must have it doled out to him like the holy men of India. A few may have an inheritance that lifts them out of the field of economic struggle, but the number is negligible. Indeed with mounting income and inheritance taxes, it may not be long before this "economically unconcerned" class of people will vanish from the earth like the dinosaur and the baluchitherium.

I will not attempt to furnish you available statistics on this point, but it is common knowledge that the clergy are woefully underpaid. The average minister's income is better than a newsboy's, about the equal of a hod-carrier's, less than a plumber's, a plasterer's, or a paper hanger's. A successful Yale graduate once ran across a classmate preaching in a small town out West. "How much do you get paid for this job?" said the tycoon. "One thousand dollars a year," answered the clergyman. "How can you live a sober, godly and righteous life on such a salary?" his friend exuded jovially, to which the preacher replied, "That is the only kind of life a man can live on a thousand dollars a year!"

Now there are many instances where ministers of modest salaries have been able to get along, educate and clothe three or four children, carry them through college, and ultimately send them out into the world as successful men and women, and we are greatly impressed, but back of such cases is usually a life-time of sacrifice, an endless fight against privation, a gallant struggle to preserve a respectable gentility and then, as a climax, a place on the rolls of the denomination's Board of Ministerial Relief. Some men are so imbued with the passion of the gospel that they are willing to make such a sacrifice. Others who might be ready to face such a situation for themselves, hesitate to ask the girl of their choice to do the same thing. This year our Board of Home Missions of the Congregational Churches ordained a young man as a minister to union labor, to work especially with migrants. He and his wife thought at first they should go out without salary, but finally were persuaded to accept a modest wage for their services. Parenthetically, I am glad that they are going to take it.

It is unbecoming the dignity of a Christian minister to live on the dole of others.

He might easily do more harm than good in doing so. Those whom he served might well think him queer, to say the least, in following such a course. The various commissions and committees functioning in our denominations to promote recruiting for the ministry might profitably direct some of their energies toward a program to raise the salary scale of ministers to insure a level that would mean reasonable economic security. The various pension schemes now in operation in our ecclesiastical bodies have done much to improve the situation for the clergy, but more still remains to be done. If a young man is going into the ministry, he must frankly recognize that he is never likely to have much of this world's goods. There is a story of one minister who had a sizeable sum of money, about $10,000 to be exact, and some one asked him how he secured it. He replied, "I got it by work, by sacrifice, by tireless effort and economy and by the death of an uncle who left me $9,999.50."

Still another factor which must be considered in dealing with this subject of recruiting for the ministry is the kind of treatment a minister receives when he enters the profession. I have been in the ministry for thirty years and I can truthfully say that during this entire period my work has been a source of immeasurable joy. I have always been treated courteously, generously, with friendliness and good will and with the unfailing support of my congregation. My profession has been treated with dignity; there has been respect for the pastoral office and I have reecived from my parishioners far beyond my deserts. I am a living contradiction of what I am about to say. Many ministers are treated shamefully. They have had to endure the niggardly treatment of short-sighted Boards of Trustees, have been bossed around by prosperous tyrants, been criticized by ignorant but smug and self-sufficient deacons and elders who have considered themselves the Lord's anointed to safeguard the preaching of the Word pure and undefiled; they have heard their wives' clothes criticized, their children's conduct held up as a reproach and have been annoyed by a thousand pinpricks that would dampen the enthusiasm of a Saint Paul.

The largest number of ministerial recruits come from the agricultural class. A much smaller number come from the homes of the professions including the clergy. How many sons in ministers' families, than which, generally speaking, there are none finer, have been deterred from entering the ministry through an unwillingness, as one put it, "to put up with the indignities which he himself had seen." I recall one Methodist minister who told me that a member of his congregation brought him a chicken presumably as a gift and later informed him that he would like to have it applied on his church pledge. I was told of still another minister who had some skill at painting who was engaged by a wealthy man to paint portraits of himself and wife. He was given $100 each for the portraits. When his congregation was apprised of the fact, they insisted that his time was wholly engaged for the church and they deducted $200 from his annual salary. One minister left town to attend the death of a member of his family and the congregation used the occasion to call a meeting and dismiss him as the pastor. One of my predecessors in my church in Stamford was called up by a good lady to ask if he would drive around with his car and pick up a package of needles from a seamstress.

Illustrations like these might be multiplied "ad infinitum." Here again is a place where, beyond all work of special committees, the church as a whole could do much to enhance the appeal of the ministry. In the early Colonial days the minister was the outstanding person of the community. He was revered and respected, his profession was regarded as sacred, and his office held with dignity and honor. The minister is no longer given such distinction. It is said that one minister walking down the street fell into a manhole and found himself in deep trouble. "Get me out! Get me out!" he cried vociferously for a half an hour or more. Finally one of his pompous church members passed down the street on his way to the golf club, and hearing the outcry, looked into the darkened pit. "Get me out! Get me out!" the minister repeated frantically. "Oh," said the man looking in, "why make such a fuss! We don't

need you 'til Sunday!" This is about the attitude which many ministers meet.

III

Now I have spoken of certain practical problems that are involved in recruiting for the ministry. Yet despite these situations there have always been ministers of the gospel and there will always be ministers of the gospel in the future. In our sacred Scriptures we find abundant illustration of men so driven by an inner compulsion that nothing could restrain them from preaching the spiritual truth which God had revealed to their hearts. Second Isaiah was such a messenger. He said, "The spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me because Jehovah has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the year of Jehovah's favor and the day of vengeance of our God." Jesus himself quoted this very text when he started out on his preaching ministry. He called his disciples to preach. To a certain convert who said, "I will follow thee wherever thou goest," he replied, "Go thou and publish abroad the kingdom of God." His final message at the time of his ascension was, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature and lo I am with you alway even unto the consummation of the ages."

Paul felt the responsibility to preach and to the Corinthians he wrote, "Necessity is laid upon me, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel." In the same spirit he admonished Timothy, "Preach the word, be urgent in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort." When one thinks of these men who were the good-news bearers of their time, he asks how they were recruited into the ministry. The answer is simple. There was no campaign to enlist them, no denominational program to intrigue them, no literature for them to study. These men had a profound religious experience, a stirring of the heart, so urgent, so forceful, so compelling, that to preach the good tidings of God was an irresistible obligation. Whenever men have preached the gospel and have preached it effectively this condition has prevailed. Before you can have ministers you must have profound religious experience. You must have a passion, a glow, an enthusiasm for something preeminently worthwhile, something which the individual considers to be of outstanding worth.

Frances Willard was a preacher of the gospel of temperance because she had an all-consuming passion for sobriety and abstinence. Anthony Comstock was a preacher of purity and however misled he may have been in his enthusiasm, nothing could resist him in the efforts to realize his ideal. Norman Thomas is a preacher of Socialism and although he has never gotten very far with it he will be preaching it to the end of his days. Henry George was a preacher of the single tax. If there are to be ministers of the gospel there must be men whose hearts are aglow with passionate devotion to Christ. A genuine religious revival in the highest and noblest sense would do more in the recruiting of men for the ministry than all the campaigns of all the denominations put together. The purport of all these comments is plain, namely that the replenishment of the ranks of ministers is not going to get far through any intensive and specific programs, but by a general upheaval in the life of the church. Give us churches on fire with religion, give us churches sensible to their clear business obligations, give us churches enhancing the dignity of the ministry through a high regard for the minister's office, and we will have little difficulty in recruiting for the Christian ministry.

IV

This does not mean that the church does not have any obligation to make specific efforts to recruit candidates for the ministry and to point out to promising young men the opportunities for service which the Christian ministry affords. There are many ways in which this can be done. The minister himself may play a very important role. He knows better than anyone else the young people in his church whose interests are in that direction. He likewise knows the particular and peculiar qualifications required

for the ministry. He knows that if the church is to have an adequate clergy it must have highly trained and intelligent men. Parenthetically it might be pointed out that too many inferior and poorly prepared men have gone into the ministry. The director of our Congregational Board of Pastoral Supply in discussing the men that he is called upon to place frankly admits that one of the difficulties of his job is that many of the men with whom he deals are men whose talents do not justify the appointments they desire. It will be frankly recognized that there are many men of limited education so embued with the power of the gospel that they are effective ministers despite their educational limitations, but generally speaking this condition does not prevail.

One of the finest opportunities open for the presentation of the ministry as a life work is at the student summer conferences for young people at the high-school level. Many of our denominations are now fostering such summer gatherings. At these conferences many young people are giving serious consideration to their life work. They are in an atmosphere of lofty idealism, when the altrusitic opportunities of Christian service come home to them with greatest force. The Roman Catholic Church starts even earlier and begins recruiting around thirteen years of age. This is a little too soon, but the high-school level is even better than the college level in carrying out any definite program of appeal. Every denomination also should have available literature giving information regarding the fields of service open to young people —the demands of the city church, the opportunities in rural areas which are even more urgent than those of the city, the home-missionary fields, the work as educators in missionary schools at home and abroad, the opportunities in medical service and the like.

Such literature would not only help in recruiting for the ministry itself, but in recruiting for the program of Christian vocation. There is also a place for work in the colleges. In too many instances our young people have gone away from their homes and their local churches for four years in college and there have been neglected by their denominations. There is a tendency to combat this evil by the use of ministers assigned to college campuses, but much more needs to be done in this direction and particularly in state universities where there is no specific religious interest such as one would find in the small Christian college. University pastors and periodic visitors from the ranks of successful clergymen could do much to impress upon the minds of idealistic youth the opportunity for service within the church itself. Theological seminaries also may help, but, after all, their responsibility is the responsibility of training, and they are thwarted in their work unless a proper program of appeal has been carried out by the ministers and by the denominations.

Some theological seminaries use their faculty as contact men with colleges and universities. Visiting these centers of learning, they give special attention to young men who are giving thought to the Christian ministry, and incidentally use the opportunity to present the appeal of their own particular school. However, recruiting is more of a task than the theological seminary can rightfully be expected to assume.

V

Still another problem related to recruiting for the ministry is the important task of keeping men in the pastoral field after they have once entered it. It is obvious that if ten men who might otherwise drop out of the ministry are kept at their posts, it is equivalent to ten new men who might be secured. Manifestly there are some misfits who get into the ministry, men who have had the impulse to preach but who have found themselves lacking in any real ability to do so. Physical handicaps, limited education, inability to get along with people—these and other factors militate against them. I recall receiving some time ago a letter from a minister out west who was evidently a consecrated man with a real desire to serve, but he was ill, a hopeless paralytic, with greatly restricted movements. He wanted me to help him find a church. But I discovered from his own statement that if he were to carry on in the ministry, it would be necessary to have a ramp built up to the

pulpit so that his wheelchair could be pushed into it, that it would be necessary for him to preach sitting down, and that special structural requirements would have to be met in his study. It would also be impossible for him to do any calling. This unfortunate plight, for which this man was in no sense responsible, creates such limitations that it is probably not wise for him even to attempt the work of the ministry, however laudable his purpose is.

But one of the reasons why a number of ministers drop out of their churches is that they have to carry on their work too much by themselves. There are literally hundreds of ministers in remote places who are lonely in their work. Colleagues of their own denomination are scattered far and wide. They have no one with whom to discuss their problems, no one to encourage them or inspire them. They have limited library facilities and may not even see a new book. Under these circumstances they grow weary in their efforts, and gradually fall by the wayside. The Presbyterian Church has a plan for watching over some of its young ministers, especially those who are receiving financial aid, and it does help them to keep themselves intellectually alive and to feel a continuing bond of connection between themselves and their denomination. The Methodist Church has its great conferences and assemblies to which the ministers are required to go. Unfortunately many of these have subordinated the inspirational character of the meetings to organizational responsibility.

In the Congregational denomination we have been carrying out in recent years very successful summer retreats for ministers. To these, leading representatives of the denomination go as teachers and workers, living with their brethren for approximately six weeks. An up-to-date library of selected books is taken along, and selected clergymen from different conferences are invited to attend. The reports from these summer retreats have been most encouraging, and we have reason to believe that many men have taken on new life and new enthusiasm for their work because of this fellowship. Here is a field to which more of our denominations should give attention. There should be definitely arranged plans to reach out, particularly to the ministers in rural areas, to uphold their hands and to keep them intellectually and spiritually alive. Two-thirds of our Congregational ministers are in rural parishes. What the percentage is in other denominations, I am not able to say, but I am convinced that a definite program of help to men in the harder and more separated parishes of our denominations would contribute greatly to the solution of the problem of providing an adequate ministry.

VI

The scope of this paper does not permit me to discuss other subjects related to the ministry and indirectly to this general problem, but these subjects are nevertheless important. For example, we have the problem of men shifting from one denomination to another. It is my understanding that the Episcopal Church is willing to give recognition to duly authorized Presbyterian ministers whose standing would not interfere with the Episcopal Church's conception of an historic Episcopate, but the Episcopal Church is not willing to give that recognition to men who have come into the Presbyterian communion from other denominations and who have Presbyterian recognition but whose ordination would not be acceptable to the Episcopal Church. The Episcopal Church could solve this problem with the Presbyterians in general, but not with the ministers who have come in by the back door. The Methodist Church has a plan whereby if a minister is no longer serving a church, he places his papers with the local conference. Such a man does not lose his ministerial standing, but he is not accredited to preach in any area unless these papers are properly transferred. Our Congregational Churches have a very loose arrangement, and if a man is once ordained as a Congregational minister, he may go anywhere and if he can get away with it he may be selected as the pastor of a church. There is still much to be done to bring orderliness and appropriate dignity to the profession of the ministry and to the pastoral office. It will be apparent that the higher are the standards which we

tain for the ministry, the better type of en we will ultimately have in this sacred rofession.

The church must be aflame with the ow and the passion of the Christian vangel. It must be businesslike and sen- ble and realize that if men are to give eir whole time to Christian service they ould be able to do so without being der the grinding burden of economic ant. The Church must sense the dignity the profession of those who are set art by the laying on of hands for the ork of the Christian ministry; it must e these men as more than errand boys, ore than pawns to be pushed about at ill, but rather ambassadors of almighty od. The Protestant Church must sur- und its clergy with something of the pute which the Roman Catholic Church ves to its priesthood, something of the anding given to the Jewish rabbi in the ncient Hebrew community. There are me programs to which attention may ightfully be directed, and which the hristian Church can foster as it seeks meet the need for adequate and trained eadership. If properly pursued these pro- rams may reasonably be expected to roduce some practical results.

VII

Despite the situation to which I have irected your attention I am not too reatly troubled by it. There have always een keepers of the sacred flame and here will always be ministers of the truth f God. There may be times of recession as well as times of advance, the tides may ebb and flow but the gospel will continue to be proclaimed. In the days of Ahab in Israel, religion reached a low ebb as his wife Jezebel, daughter of the King of Tyre, imported the worship of Baalim. But out of the desert came Elijah, rough, impetuous, uncouth, to call the people back to God. When Israel and Judah were undermined with injustice and social corruption, when the rich grew richer and the poor grew poorer, when religion elaborated itself in multitudes of mechanistic forms but lost its spirit and its power, Amos and Hosea appeared on the scene to proclaim social righteousness and the unfailing love of God (8th century B.C.).

Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Haggai and Zechariah followed, fanning into a blaze the hopes of the people. The humble followers of Jesus caught the light of a great Truth and went out to preach the great evangel which Christ had set forth. So it was with Paul, with Savonarola, with Martin Luther and with countless others. It is the inspiration and the power of a great Truth, the compulsion of a holy enthusiasm, the passion of an overwhelming love for God and his kingdom that brings forth preachers of the Everlasting word. So it must be today. Let the church keep herself spiritually alive, let it be true to Christ, His life, His message, His redeeming gospel, and we shall not lack for men who will heed the challenge and who will answer as did Isaiah when in response to the call of the Lord, "Here am I; send me."

WANTED—A BOOK

Every now and then a far-a-way chaplain writes: "You have furnished me with what I need for my men but I need something for myself—one good book to read and study. Please send me such a book. I do not know what the good new books are but won't you send me one?"

What do you say? Have you not at least one good book from which you have received profit to send to your brother? Send it to me and I'll see it gets to the man who has asked for it. We have more than eighty requests on file. If you cannot spare one of your books, won't you send us the money to buy one of the best? You can suggest the book if you wish and it will be sent in your name. The average cost is $3.00.

F. L. FAGLEY

The Minister

Hired Man — or Fellow Servant?

Congregational Board of Pastoral Supply

Horace F. Holton, Executive Secretary

WE have lost our minister and we have got to hire a new one. They told me that this was the Congregational Supply House. What have you got to offer?" Thus the chairman of a church committee greeted me one day at our office. My reply was, "You don't hire a minister, you call him!" On another occasion at a conference with the committee of an influential church, the first question asked was, "Would it be possible for us to engage a minister on trial?" I answered politely, but positively, "No."

There is a growing tendency among our laymen to regard their ministers as hired men, employed by them, at a wage, to do the work of the church. The new Department of the Ministry will, I hope, make a serious effort to check this trend lest the prestige and influence of our calling be seriously impaired. Perhaps this attitude on the part of our laymen is a natural one for them to hold. In business they are used to the employer-employee relationship. To them the church is a business and should be conducted as such. The minister, as one laymen expressed it, is the general manager, and should be held to the same standards of success or failure.

I wonder if some ministers do not unintentionally help to confirm the laymen in this idea. They often think and talk of their work as a job quite like that of any other workman. "Why not be realistic and accept this employer-employee relationship?" they ask. This conception of the ministry on the part of many laymen and some ministers, combined with the frequency of short pastorates, may explain the growing practice of substituting a Recognition Service for the Installing Council. All of which is contrary to the ideals and tradition of our Congregational practice. Historically our churches have regarded their ministers, not as hired men but as fellow servants of Christ; they and their ministers being workers together with God.

There is a wide difference between the status of a hired man and that of the fellow servant. In the case of the hired man the employer gives the orders and the employee does the work. In the case of the fellow servants, all work together as friends and brothers. In the church no one should work for pay. A church provides a salary for its minister only that he may be free to do the work of the Kingdom. The hired man occupies an inferior position in the social system; though he and his boss may be the best of friends. Fellow servants on the other hand have a status of equality. So their work, no matter how humble or hard, is always with dignity and honor.

The position of fellow servant is implied in the "Call" of the church. The minister is introduced to the committee by a friend; it may be a fellow minister, or a Board such as ours. There is wisdom in the tradition of the "Call"; a significance implied in the Councils of Ordination and Installation, but ignored in the Recognition Service. So the minister comes to his church not as an hired man but as a fellow servant of Christ. By his training and experience he is to occupy a place of leadership and oversight, with the full and loyal consent of his fellow servants. He must not be dictatorial and assume the role of boss in his parish. Such a role while it may be customary in the authoritarian churches is absolutely contrary to the spirit of our democratic system. Of course, a minister should be able to maintain his position in a parish, and he must do it, not because of any external authority given or assumed, but by his wisdom, patience and tact in personal and parish relationship, and by the integrity of a consecrated Christian personality. True leadership and real sovereignty come through humble and disinterested service.

Not hired men, but fellow servants of
d, brothers of Him who came not to
ministered unto but to minister and to
give his life a ransom for many. That
is the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.
Let us see to it that we keep it high.

Two Unusual Books for Ministers

T has been suggested that THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY present in each issue one or two outstanding books h comments not drawn from material m the publisher's "blurb." Herewith presented two quite worthwhile books, h requiring careful study.

ENGLISH PRAYER BOOKS by Stanley Morison, *MacMillans* ($1.75)

This little book of 142 pages purports be "an introduction to the literature Christian public worship." The five apters are: I The Creative Period (the st five centuries); II The Fifth to nth Centuries (the Gregorian Service ok); III The Tenth to Fifteenth Cenry (Medieval period); IV The Modern riod (Episcopal worship); V The esent Day (free church adaptations th the addition of two vocational servs).

This book is written from the Anglican int of view. As our worship forms her grew largely out of Episcopal worip or were developed as a means of *parating from* the Anglican worship, is point of view may be all the more lpful. Scant attention has been given the influence of Presbyterian contribons, e.g., the Westminster forms are t indexed; nor is there reference to the ntributions to worship literature by hat is known to the English as "Colo-al" influences, e.g., American liturgical velopment and the very significant conibution of the South African Presbyrian "Book of Worship."

Nevertheless it is a *must* book for those ho seek to understand worship. Our wn movement towards a richer worship rvice emphasizes the externals too much; egenerates at times into consideration f "pretty" furnishings; introduces the asual and even the bazaar; in these ways ur worship is sometimes like seed sown n shallow ground. The realm of the pirit has depth and worship to minister to the soul as a deepening process must possess a depth-reaching quality. One schooled in the teachings of this little book will never rest content with less than the deeply true and the eternal in worship.

II. WORSHIP IN THE COMMON LIFE by Hayman, *Cambridge University Press* ($2.50)

This book is dedicated "to the fellowship of men and women, world-wide and beyond the world, who are made one in Christ Jesus." This book is not for light reading but for long hard study. It is a book to wrestle with until its message is firmly woven into the thought pattern.

These days bring to multitudes emotional experiences far out of the ordinary. We are emotionally unprepared for the problems we now face and the even greater problems to be faced for a generation or a millennium. Until we have learned how to live and work together with mixed races on a world basis, manipulating and being manipulated by the forces of machinery and by organized and unorganized social forces, mankind will be increasingly plagued by internal and external conflicts undreamed of by our fathers. Talk with a Serviceman who has been in battle, a worker in modern industry, or a social worker in any section of society—and note their reaction to their experiences. How can the human mind and spirit endure these tensions? Whence shall help come? The ancients found the answer—"My help cometh from the Lord."

It is the common life of multitudes that must be reinforced for the strain of today and tomorrow. This reinforcement is built up within by the power that is without. Worship is the manner and the method and the way of bringing Divine power into human life. This little book indicates how the worship of the sanctuary may be made manifest in the market place.

F. L. F.

The MINISTER'S QUARTERLY

Beginning with this issue THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY makes its bow to the ministers of our Congregational Christian Churches. This is a natural development of THE SEMINAR QUARTERLY begun fifteen years ago by the Commission on Evangelism and Devotional Life as a little journal "issued in the interest of worship and preaching."

THE SEMINAR QUARTERLY has filled a place in our denominational life that would otherwise be empty. It has never been promotional in any professional manner. It has had but one purpose, namely, to bring to all our pastors more of the thinking of their brethren who have been willing to share their experience and their insights.

The aim of the enlarged journal is in strict keeping with the purpose that has been followed through the years.

Every minister will rejoice that Dr. Atkins, so well known and so sincerely loved by all our ministers, will continue as editor. And when I say editor I mean editor. He has had and will have absolute authority over all the pages. He is a dictator in a democratic organization, but so benign is his rule that we universally rejoice and hold him in ever higher esteem.

The enlarged QUARTERLY makes possible the inclusion of more material bearing particularly on the problems of the ministry and the discussion of measures and methods for their solution.

FREDERICK L. FAGLEY

For The Commission on Evangelism and Devotional Life and The Department of the Ministry

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